(37)

A VISITATION

By way of

DECLARATION

UNTO

The Manifestation of the spirit in you Rulers and Heads of these Nations, both Parliament, Officers, and Souldiers, that are in Arms and Authority to do Service for the Common-Wealth outwardly.

Amongst whom I formerly have had my Conversation about thirteen or fourteen years, and with many of them I have often engaged against the Enemies of the Peace and Liberties of the honest people of these Nations, and that some of the old Officers and Souldiers may very well remember.

VVhat ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest? thou Iordan, that thou wast driven back? ye Mountains, that ye skipped like Rams? and ye little hills like Lambs? Psal.114.5,6.

VVas it not because of the dreadful presence of the Almighty, who hath said of old unto his people, I will restore thy Iudges as at the first, and thy Counsellors as at the beginning, afterward thou shalt be called the City of Righteousness, the faithful City, Isa.1.26.

From a true Lover of your souls, that loves to do Justice, and all that join with them, known unto the children of men by this Name, *Joseph Fuce.*

LONDON, Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the *Bull* and *Mouth* near *Aldersgate*, 1659.

A Visitation by way of Declaration unto the manifestation of the Spirit in you Rulers and Heads of these Nations, &c.

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OH ye wise ones of the earth! (that are in authority to sit in Parliament) lend your ears, and hear in this the day of your visitation, *Luke* 19.44. and be not lifted up in pride of heart, and bitterness of spirit against the Lords Heritage, which the proud, and lofty Rulers, and envious Magistrates hath oppressed grievously, as you your selves may very well know, & consider what hath been their pretence, and what hath been their reward in the end: Have they not been overturned, broken, and scattered as the chaffe before the winde? And had this happened a great while ago, in another Age, or a far off in Forreign Countreys, then had there been more necessity for me to have spoken more larger of what hath been acted by them, and what hath happened unto them; but you that are not wilful and blind, have your own selves both seen and heard of their most unjust and unreasonable cruelty which they have acted, especially upon those despised People which live godly in Christ Jesus, although others (that are not according to their minds) hath not altogether escaped their wicked Decrees: Therefore in the pure fear of the Lord I exhort you that are more tender-hearted, and do feelingly know what they have done, that you take heed that none creep in among you to corrupt you, but consider truly and honestly, so as to let those things which hath been done by them, and that which came upon them, be for examples unto you, 1 *Cor.* 10.6. so that you may by no means be perswaded to do as they have done, neither to suffer that to stand which the Papists of old, & the oppressors of late hath set up, which is contrary to the will of God, & the publike good of the Common-Wealth; for because of these, and such things, the Lords hand was against them, to cut off some of the chiefe of them, and to give the other up to be scattered as the small dust of the earth before the winde; therefore you that are in their places, listen a little, and incline your ears to hear the voice of the just, and your hearts to understand, ye Heads of these Nations, for unto you I write in obedience to the spirit, and in love to your souls, you are all to be turned in unto the manifestation of the spirit which is given to every man to profit withall, 1 *Cor.* 12.7. and so all to learn of it how to perform and bring to pass the good works which many hath promised to do, but hath not performed them, because they took counsel, and not of the Lord, *Isa.* 30. and went out from the manifestation of the spirit in them, which is light, and despised it's reproof, and so hated the instruction of the just within, and took counsel together, with the chief priests, (as the pharisees did) without, in darkness,

and the priests being of so many opinions, and in so much confusion and opposition one against another, but all in darkness: And the people that know no other Preacher but the Priests, they are all like the priests, for the priests have taught them so to be, for so the leaders of the people hath caused them to err, *Ier.*23. And the people (by the instructions of the priests) hath made choice of men of several opinions unfit to sit in Parliament, yet such have for a time sate as members in Parliament, & others that hath meant wel, that are not taught by the priests, they have made choice of such as would have done that which the Lord requireth, which is, to undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free: *Isa.*58.6. So some were for taking off oppression, and others for laying it on, and when these came together, there were divisions among themselves, some for that which was right, and others for that which was wrong, and the priests party (made up with many Lawyers) being the greater in number, as you your selves very well know, that they that would have done good, knew not how to perform it because of evil-doers which did oppose them; and if there be such among you, they will hinder you if they be not removed in time; And therefore I warn you who are in Authority, that you may not take counsel of the many priests, to be deceived by them, if they should do as they have done, that is, to come bowing and crouching with flattering titles, from their lying lips, and deceitful hearts, and with their feigned Petitions, which they call Humble: And this hath been their manner of creeping (unawares) into the hearts and affections of Parliament-Men, and others, to draw their minds from the pure principle of God in them, which should have taught them to have been of one mind, and so to have proceeded, to the glory of God, and for the publike good of the Nation, according to the will of God; and this are ye witnesses of: Therefore all you that are of such a noble mind, to do justice, and to love mercy, and walk humbly with God, *Mich.*6.8. [Mark] you must all take counsel together of the Lord, and so come to be all taught by one Teacher within you all, that so you may come all to stand together in the Counsel of the Lord, who hath given the manifestation of the Spirit to every one of you to profit withall, and all that profit with the manifestation of the spirit (which is light) they must owne that to be their Teacher, to teach them how to cast off every weight and burden, and the sin that doth so easily beset them, that so the seed in every particular may go free. Now you must of necessity be turned unto the light of Christ in you, before you can see or know what doth oppress, and what is oppressed in every particular; and I say unto you as *Paul* said unto the *Romans*, *That which may be known of God, is manifested in you*; *Rom.*1.19. and therefore you are to come unto a teacher within you, which would teach every one how to cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the Armour of light, *Rom.*13.12. Mark, Pride is a work of darkness, love of the honor and glory of the world, covetousness, and self-private ends, are works of darkness, and the ground from whence such things doth arise, doth oppress the seed, & is cursed wheresoever it is standing, & the beam is to be cast out of your own eye first, before you can see clearly how to pull the mote out of your brethrens eyes; and do not seek honor one of another unto your selves, for that was a work which proud *Hammon* did, *Esth.*2. And *Hammons* proud, envious

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nature hath much appeared in theſe our dayes, unto the grievous oppreſſing of the Lords people; but ſuch oppreſſors the Lord hath, and will bring into contempt, and ſo dishonor them; but ſuch as truly fear the Lord, and are for the exalting of his truth in themſelves, and in others, ſuch the Lord wil honour, for they ſhall ſit together with Chriſt at his right hand, where is joy and pleaſures for ever-more: And ſuch as are Heires of this great and everlaſting Honor, they have no need of the leſſer Honor, which will vaniſh away in a moment, when everlaſting reproach and contempt cometh upon them: And if you receive him whom God hath ſent to be a Leader and Teacher unto his people, for to lead and teach you how to walk and act according to the Law of God, which is light, then you will not need the counſel of the blind leaders, the Hireling-prieſts; for ye your ſelves know the counſel of the prieſts hath led the people into ſo much confuſion and diviſion, that they could not ſtand, and ſo thoſe words of Chriſt are fulfilled, which ſaith, *A houſe divided againſt it ſelf, that houſe cannot ſtand*, Mark 3.25. And ſo of a truth, if you ſhould take counſel of the many prieſts to be divided, you muſt not think to ſtand: Therefore in obedience unto the everlaſting truth, and in love unto your ſouls do I write unto you, that you may be all warned in time, to own the onely true teacher within you, which is Chriſt the light, and believe in him for ſtrength and ſalvation, ſo may you come to be all of one heart, and of one ſoul, as the multitude were, and are, that did, and do believe in the light, and ſo may you be made both able and willing to proceed and go on together, doing that which is good, and undoing that which is evil, fearing the Lord, and hating covetouſneſs; and fear not men, but fear the Lord, and look unto him for ſalvation, and wait upon him to have your ſtrength renewed, for his Arm is ſtretched forth, and revealed to uphold thoſe that walk in his light, to his own praiſe and glory, who is God over all bleſſed for ever.

To all the valiant Officers and Souldiers, ſmall and great, amongſt whom I was for many years, a private ſouldier, Corporal, and Serjeant, in the time of the late wars, and now in the bowels of love, and in obedience unto the ſpirit do I write unto you, that the noble principle or witneſs of God in you may be the more ſtirred up, and you the more brought down unto it, that with the light (which is the noble principle) you may ſee how tender and low in heart ſome of you were in the time of the wars, when you did fear the Lord, and met together, and were in diſtreſs as to the outward, then did the Lord cauſe his bleſſings to fall upon many of the Army, as the dew upon the tender graſs, whereby they were refreſhed and ſtrengthened in heart with boldneſs to go on againſt their enemies without, which the Lord gave into your hands becauſe of their abominations; and not onely ſo, but ſome of you did ſeperate your ſelves from the prieſts and their Churches, the Papiſts old Maſs-Houſes, and from pleaſures and ſporting your ſelves, and from rioting in the day-time of your afflictions, and did humble your ſelves, and keep many dayes of Humiliation, then was there a pure principle of God ſtirring amongſt you, moving your hearts to pitty the oppreſſed, and to viſit the moſt honeſt people that were grieved and afflicted in the Countreys where you came, becauſe of the abominable Idolatry

latry which was set up in the Nations, and many of the honest people did much affect you, and did assist you with such things as they had for your service, and then was there good intentions and desires stirred up in many, and great and fair promises were made what should be done if the Lord would but give you the victory over your enemies which were in arms against you; and Engagements were propounded and taken, and many did often seek the Lord (as they called it) by praying and promising unto God what they would be, and what they would do, if he would but stretch forth a finger of his mighty hand, or but make known a little of his great and unexpressible power, whereby their enemies might be overturned; and many such like expressions were used, sometimes with tears vows were made unto the Lord, insomuch that the Lord did hear and answer, (for his own seed's sake, which groaned earnestly in many of you to be delivered) and when you were very low in strength and number as to outward appearance, and your enemies great and many; [mark] even then amongst you did the Lord arise, and make known himself to be a mighty God of War, *Exod.* 15. 3. and by his dreadful power overturned and scattered your Enemies, and not onely so, but also kept many of you safe; and at the last after the fall of many thousands, some on the one side, and some on the other, even then did the Lord bring you again forth of the battels by the strength of his own Arm, by which he preserved you when many were cut off, and destroyed; and when he the Lord of Hosts had appeared so wonderfully for us, against our Enemies, that their great numbers were cut off and scattered, and fled into other Islands, Castles, and Holes, and then they thought no place strong enough for them, their hearts were so dismayed: And when the Lord had done this Work which was so great and wonderful, then the well-affected people looked for something to be done, but very little or nothing was effected; but then there might have been excuses made, because of corrupt members in the Army, and an House of Lords to hinder both Army and Parliament, & they rose up against the Army; but you may very wel remember how the Officers of the Army joyned and condescended to the private Souldiers, and to men of low degree, to join together; and Agitators were chosen, as well of private Souldiers, as Officers; and then there was a great cry against oppression, and engaging one another against a King or House of Lords, and at randezvouz's there were great outcryes for Justice, with a great shouting, saying one and all, *Justice, Justice;* but when the House of Lords were dissolved, and the King beheaded, and all opposers of the work, which you promised to do) were subdued to outward appearance: now take notice what hindered the Parliament and Army then, that they could not do the work which they had vowed, promised, and engaged (both unto God, and the well-affected people in these Nations) for to do? I shall make mention of some of the chief particulars: Some of the chief Officers of the Army they lov'd to be honoured by men, others they coveted to be rich, and others they went into pleasures, as Hunting, Bowling, and sporting themselves in the day time, when they should have paid their vows unto the Lord, by fulfilling their promises; and others into carelesness and ease in the fleshly mind, others into oppression, talking of reformation, and seeking

ſing, as the phariſees did, to have the praiſe of men: And others were turned unto a meaſure of the true light in their conſciences, and bore a teſtimony for the Lord againſt evil doings; and moſt of us came out, and were turned out from amongſt you for the truth's ſake, when we had finiſhed, and were finiſhing our teſtimony: And ſo you may ſee your foes were them of your own hearts at the laſt; and in that time the Parliament lent their ears unto the prieſts that ſought their gain from their quarter, that came flattering with their Petitions for Augmentations, becauſe they are greedy, and never have enough, *Iſa.* 56 11. And the Parliament were ſo deceived by their good words and fair ſpeeches, that they went from their work, which was to do juſtice in taking off oppreſſion, and in their dark minds ſet themſelves to grope after Religion, thinking to ſettle that without man, which the Lord by his power alone ſetleth in the hearts of his people; but thereabout the Parliament ſate a long time dreaming, until *Oliver Crommel* turned them out of the Houſe: And thus they were deceived by the ſubtilty of the Serpent, which hearkened unto the prieſts. And after there was another Parliament which did begin as if they would have done ſomething for the Common-Wealth; for they began to conſider the great oppreſſion of tythes which the Popes power cauſed to be taken from the people unjuſtly, to uphold their unrighteous Worſhip. But you may remember very well how the prieſts did flock together, and ride, and run, and ſo beſtirred themſelves with their flattering titles, and their deceit unto the Rulers, fearing greatly they ſhould looſe the inheritance which the Pope their Father in the time of popery, moſt unjuſtly took from the people, and gave unto the Jeſuits, and ſo tythes came unto theſe prieſts that are of the Popes ſtock: But thoſe children of the *Romiſh Whore* (the falſe *Church*) did ſo prevail with the Rulers, that they got that Parliament ſuddenly turned forth, and then there were inventions to ſtrengthen the old papiſts Laws by which the Lords people hath been grievouſly oppreſſed; for ſome of the prieſts hath taken near ten times as much as is their due according to the Popes allowance at the firſt; yet the prieſts were not ſatisfied, but ſtill thirſted after blood. And laſtly, there was a Parliament to be choſen, and then the prieſts ſtirred again exceedingly, crying, when men were mentioned to ſit in Parliament, *Are they for tythes?* So that if the honeſt people had made mention of moderate men, they could not chuſe ſuch in many places, becauſe the multitude that follow the prieſts were the moſt in number, and ſo chuſed the greater part of the Members which ſome thought they would have ſatisfied the prieſts thirſt with blood, and they proceed not onely to oppreſs the Lords people called *Quakers*, but they ſought to oppreſs all others that differed from them, both Army, and all well-affected people thereunto belonging, and then in due time were they diſcovered unto you that did return the eyes of your minds in a little unto that noble principle which did once ſtir you up againſt perſecution for conſcience-ſake, and that did manifeſt unto you your unfaithfulneſs in not performing what you had promiſed to do, and ſome of you did make a pretty honeſt confeſſion, although others might oppoſe you in that thing, as they have done in other things that were honeſt: But conſider, had you done before what you have begun, and now

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pretend to do, then could not you and many others have seen, nor scarce have believed that the priests and their chief followers had been such cruel oppressing tyrants, and blood-thirsty ones, as they have manifested themselves to be, that now you may say when any pleadeth for them, *By their fruits we know them, whatsoever any say of them.* And again take notice, Would many have believed that God would have manifested his power so wonderfully in these dayes to uphold his little flock so patiently and willingly to follow his Son in suffering such grievous things as hath been laid upon them to try them for Christs Name sake, who is the Captain of our salvatiō? & therefore do we follow him in the regeneration, who is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and with the light of Christ in your consciences, you may all see I have not spoken very much of those things which hath happened since our engaging at the first against tyrants and oppressors of the godliest people in those dayes, for conscience-sake; but although I have but hinted or spoken of some of the divers appearances of that old persecuting spirit which hath of late appeared under so many fair pretences of Religion and Reformation, yet I hope you will find it to be enough to answer the witness in you, which will shew you the truth of this short Declaration and Exhortation in love to your souls, so that when you are tempted to do as they have done, you may not be ignorant of the evil, and what will follow unto you as well as unto them, if you do as they have done; and be you assured, the tempter will come unto you more subtilly then ever, to tempt you; but the light in the conscience is sufficient for to discover and make manifest all temptations both without and within you, as your minds are kept unto the true light, and exercised by it, for that doth lead into lowliness of mind, and into love and tender-heartedness, and so you may come to profit with the manifestation of the spirit, which is given unto you for that end, 1 *Cor.* 12.7. and dwell in the Love which God hath shed abroad in your hearts, for he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, who is the habitation of Justice, *Jer.* 50.7. And now my Friends, both Parliament and Officers of the Army, in whose hearts it is to do Justice, love Mercy, & to walk humbly with your God, the day of of your tryal once more is come, and an opportunity is put into your hands to try you once more whether you will endeavour to please God, or man, and whether you will act according to the will of God, or men: And thus the Lord is trying of you whether you will fulfil the Promises, Vows and Covenants which you made formerly unto him when you were low and in distress, and this the Lord is doing before he utterly cuts you off from the land of the living, and cast you out into outer darkness, and seal you down into the pit with the wicked for ever. Therefore be all awakened, and come all unto the light in you, or else ye cannot be of one mind; for he hath said, *Without me ye can do nothing, John* 15.5. But all that owns him to be their Leader, they come to walk in the counsel of the Lord, and to stand in the way of his judgements, which are just and true, and righteous altogether. And so the Lord direct you by the manifestation of his spirit, to do that which is well-pleasing unto him, that the soul, which is immortal, may find rest at the last, for evermore. From a lover of true Judgement and Mercy, *Joseph Fuce.*

THE END.